

BOOK REVIEWS

A. MICHAEL POWELL, JAMES F. WEEDIN, AND SHIRLEY A. POWELL. 2008. **Cacti of Texas: A Field Guide, with Emphasis on the Trans Pecos Species.** (ISBN-13: 978-0-89672-611-6, pbk.). Texas Tech University Press, 2903 4th Street, Box 41037, Lubbock, Texas 79409-1037, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.ttup.ttu.edu, 800-832-4042). \$24.95, 383 pp., 314 color photographs, 124 maps, 9" × 6".

"The Grover E. Murray Studies in the Southwest" has helped to produce one more fabulous effort from Michael Powell and company. This beautiful field guide is the companion publication to *Cacti of the Trans Pecos & Adjacent Areas* (Powell et al. 2004). Both books have a bit more emphasis for species in the Trans Pecos region. This new field guide is a soft cover that is well made, serving as a quick reference for cacti throughout Texas with keys, names, characteristics, habitat description, population distribution, and a color plate for almost every species documented. The earlier treatment of 2004 is a systematic documentation of the Trans Pecos species of Cactaceae and goes into much more detail about the taxonomy, biology, chemistry, and genetics. *Cacti of Texas* now provides an excellent reference for a very challenging subject in a state with more cactus species than anywhere else in North America.—Justin Allison, Research Associate, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 500 East 4th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4025, U.S.A.

Cacti of Texas is a somewhat technical field guide with unusually good pictures. These bright, attractive photographs are so well organized that someone who knew nothing about cacti could quickly find the place where his cactus is discussed. Beginning with tall, narrow and branching cacti, commonly known as "chollas," the cacti become gradually shorter and rounder (one dimension at a time), and at the same time spinier and spinier. Finally, on pages 264-266, we come to some cacti that are so round and so spiny that they look like snowmen—members of the genus *Epilantha*. Then the cacti grow longer, thinner and less spiny again, as well as becoming more like bushes instead of cacti. At the very end, we have *Pereskia aculeata* (lemonvine), which is almost spineless.

For those who are familiar with botanical terms related to cacti, there is a page on every species and variety. The scientific name and its origin are given, along with the places in Texas where the plant can be found. Then the appearances of the stem (or pad), spines, flowers, fruits and seeds are discussed in detail. I recommend the glossary.

Cacti of Texas has a picture and description of almost every cactus that grows in Texas, with a small map showing where in the Trans-Pecos region they grow most often. It is a very good guide for identifying wild cacti. Too bulky for a pocket, it will fit into most purses and all backpacks. It is aimed at advanced students.—Kalisi Waterman, Junior Intern, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 500 East 4th Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4025, U.S.A.